IN THE CLAIMS:

1-56. (Canceled)

57. (New) A method for the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) comprising contacting the diseased mucosa of the gastrointestinal tract with a therapeutic amount of a polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of xanthan gum and hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC) as the sole therapeutic agent.

58. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the disease state is pouchitis.

59. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the disease state is left sided ulcerative colitis.

60. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the disease state is Crohn's disease.

61. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the polysaccharide is xanthan gum.

62. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the polysaccharide is HPMC.

63. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the polysaccharide is administered in the form of an enteric coated dosage form adapted to release its contents within the region of the jejunum in the colon.

64. (New) The method according to Claim 57 wherein said therapeutic agent is rectally administered in the form of an rectally administrable pharmaceutical composition.

65. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the polysaccharide is administered in the form of a composition comprising a liquid enema containing xanthan gum in a concentration of about 0.4 to about 2% w/w (based on the composition).

66. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein the said polysaccharide is administered in the form of a composition comprised of a foam enema containing xanthan gum in a concentration of about 1.4 to about 2.5% w/w (based on the composition).

67. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein said polysaccharide is administered in the form of a composition comprised of a liquid enema containing HPMC in a concentration of about 1 to about 20% w/w (based on the composition).

68. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein said polysaccharide is administered in the form of a composition comprised of a foam enema containing HPMC in a concentration of about 2.5 to about 25% w/w (based on the composition).

69. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein said polysaccharide is administered in the form of a composition comprised of a rectally administrable composition comprised of xanthan gum in an amount of about 400 to about 2000 mg per unit dose.

70. (New) The method according to Claim 57, wherein said polysaccharide is administered in the form a rectally administrable pharmaceutical composition comprising HPMC in an amount of about 1 to about 20g per unit dose.

71. (New) A post-gastrically available delayed release oral (DRO) pharmaceutical composition for the treatment or prophylaxis of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), said composition comprising as the sole therapeutically active ingredient a polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of xanthan gum and hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC) in an amount effective to treat IBD, together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or vehicle, said composition being an enteric coated dosage form adapted to release its contents within the region of the jejunum to the colon.

72. (New) The DRO pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 71, wherein the polysaccharide is xanthan gum.

73. (New) The DRO pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 71, wherein the polysaccharide is HPMC.

74. (New) The DRO pharmaceutical composition according to Claim 71 in unit dose form containing about 400 to about 2000 mg of the polysaccharide per unit dose.

75. (New) A liquid enema composition for the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), said composition comprising hydroxypropylmethylcellulose (HPMC) as the sole therapeutic active agent in an amount effective to treat inflammatory bowel disease, together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or vehicle, said HPMC being present in a concentration of about 1 to about 20 % w/w based on the weight of the composition, and in an amount of about 1 to 20 g per unit dose.

76. (New) The liquid enema according to Claim 75, wherein the HPMC is in a concentration of about 5 to about 20 % w/w/ based on the composition.